



Mercedes-Benz E550 Coupe

Photos by Michael Cooney

anywhere to access manual control. Just leave it in Drive, and if you want to shift manually, tap the console lever left or right, or use the steering wheel paddles. There is elegance in simplicity.

A 268-horsepower V6 is available, also with the 7-speed auto. That saves you about \$6,500, and gains three mpg in the EPA estimates. It's no slouch either, with a claimed 0–60 run of 6.2 seconds.

With the Coupe's adjustable suspension set on Sport, the shocks noticeably firmed up and handling around super-tight bends went from very good to excellent for a car this size. Pushing the Sport button also causes the transmission to hold lower gears longer, aiding in your enjoyment of playtime. Yes, this is a machine you can have loads of fun driving on your favorite winding roads.

Playtime consumes more fuel, of course, which brings up a nit to pick. This model, V8 in particular, needs a larger fuel tank. At 17.4 gallons, it's a bit small, especially compared with the sedan's 21.1 gallons. The only other obvious lack was the absence of a rear-center armrest. Especially since it only seats two in the rear, an armrest would be nice. A beautiful coupe with the 3-pointed star deserves one.

An E550 Coupe begins at \$55,450 and this nicely optioned unit totaled \$65,715. It is EPA rated at 15-city, 23-highway mpg and I averaged 18.8 mpg.

In a wonderful combination of luxury and sportiness, the E550 Coupe was highly satisfying to drive, especially while exploring its limits on winding roads. At the same time, it's supremely comfortable when driving around "normally." An impressive car any way you look at it. Discover more at mbusa.com. 

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2011 Mercedes-Benz E550 Coupe Sporty, smooth and powerful. And cool.

There's something special about 2-door coupes. Something that adds "zing!" to owning one. The Mercedes-Benz E550 Coupe is one of the finer examples. Its sleek, smooth styling bears little

resemblance to the ultra-conservative E-Class Sedan. A convertible version of the Coupe is offered as well.



The Coupe's roofline sets the tone, flowing in one smooth arc from hood to trunk. Adding to the look is that when front and rear side windows are lowered, there's no B-pillar. It's open space all the way through — just like the hardtop coupes from the '50s and '60s.

Inside, there's lots to like. A Panorama Sunroof offers views for front and rear passengers. Perforated leather seats let you blow warm or cool air through them—part of the \$6,450 Premium Package that also

includes a sound system upgrade with MP3, rearview camera, and a host of other amenities. Front and rear seats are comfortable, and fronts adjust in every imaginable way — giving perfect support everywhere. Outstanding. Rear legroom is adequate, and the front seat's power-forward feature makes it easier to plop yourself back there.

Powered by 5.5L 382-horsepower V8 with a 7-speed automatic, forward thrust is immediate and strong. This one packs a nice wallop and sounds magnificent. Not loud, just a subdued rumble increasing in pitch as revs climb. MB claims 0–60 in 5.0 seconds, and I believe it. It's quick.

Mercedes-Benz has the best solution for manually shifting automatics. You needn't move the console lever



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